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FM AMEMBASSY RABAT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5986
INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE 3242
RUEHNC/AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT IMMEDIATE 3437
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE 4553
RUEHCL/AMCONSUL CASABLANCA IMMEDIATE 2759

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SIPDIS

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STATE FOR NEA/MAG

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [MO](#)

SUBJECT: THERE'S A NEW PRINCESS IN THE ROYAL FAMILY

¶1. This cable is sensitive but unclassified. Please protect accordingly.

¶2. (SBU) A salute of 21 cannon shots boomed across Rabat from El Mechouar Palace shortly after 8 p.m. on February 28 to announce the birth of the king's second child, Princess Lalla Khadija. Naming the baby Khadija, the name of the Prophet Mohammed's first wife, links the new princess to Islam and to her lineage as a descendant of the prophet. The nine-member medical team consisted of six Moroccans, one American, and two Frenchmen. The princess weighed 4.16 kg (about 8 pounds) and measured 49 cm. (about 23 inches); and, her mother, Princess Lalla Salma, and she were in good health, according to the official announcement.

¶3. (SBU) Celebrations started almost immediately in many streets and people assembled by the palace. Folklore groups and music bands continued chanting and dancing through the night. The King and his brother, Moulay Rachid, greeted the crowd in front of El Mechouar Palace before welcoming journalists and broadcast media to take pictures of the newborn princess.

¶4. (SBU) The Royal Household, Protocol and Chancellery announced the princess's birth on RTM and 2M television stations shortly after 8 p.m. The public was told that "Visitors Books" are available at the royal palace, in the prefectures and at Moroccan embassies abroad for those wishing to congratulate the monarch and the royal family. The Ambassador expects to sign.

¶5. (SBU) The country expected Lalla Salma to give birth February 15. When the baby was overdue, rumors flew around the country. Some said the baby was a boy, others that it was a girl. As the days passed, the rumors were embellished: the baby had been born impaired or that the baby was stillborn. Before Princess Lalla Khadija's birth, the Royal Household, Protocol and Chancellery reassured Moroccans that Princess Lalla Salma was in good health and that they would be informed when the baby was born. The opacity and surrounding speculation are characteristic of palace activities.

Visit Embassy Rabat's Classified Website;
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/rabat>

Riley